

Letter to a Friend:

IN WHICH

The Occasional Conformists

ARE PROVED TO BE GUILTY

SCHISM and HYPOCRISY.

IN ANSWER

To some Arguments produc'd to the contrary in a late Pamphlet,

INTITUL'D

The Rights of Protestant Dissenters, &c.

O X F O R D,

Printed at the *Theater* for *Anth. Peisley* Bookseller.

And are to be sold by *James Knapton* at the Crown in

St. Paul's Church-yard LONDON 1704.

Price 6d.

A

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Inprimatur,

OF

GUILTY **DE LAUNE**

Vice-Chan. Oxon.

Aug. 21.
1704.

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trary in a late Pamphlet,



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by S. Peter, others by Christ himself, and so
would have themselves distinguished by their
Teachers: and glory in them according

to the preeminence of one above the other:
This occasion'd Animosity and Parties
amongst them, and on account of these

IN compliance with your earnest request,
I have given you my thoughts concern-
ing Occasional Conformity. It is my opi-
nion that those who (to use a late Au-
thor's words) *statedly dissent from, and*
partially and occasionally conform to the
Church of England, are guilty of these two
 sins, of Schism and Hypocrisy.

I, Of Schism; because they Communicate
with those Assemblies which separate from a
sound part of the Catholic Church: this
separation from a sound part of the Catho-
lick Church may properly be call'd Schism,
I prove from Scripture, and the Writers of
the Primitive Church. First from Scripture.

The Schism of the Corinthians according to
S. Paul's account of it, consisted in this, viz.
that every one of them said, *I am of Paul,*
and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of
Christ, i. e. some of them said they were con-
verted to and instructed in the Christian Re-
ligion by S. Paul, others by Apollos, others

by

A

by

See the rights
of Protestant
Dissenters p.
22.

1 Cor. c. 1.
v. 10. 11. 12.

by S. Peter, others by Christ himself, and so would have themselves distinguish'd by their Teachers; and glory'd in them according to the preeminence of one above the other: This occasion'd Animosities and Quarrels amongst them, and on account of these St. Paul saies they were carnal, and elsewhere reckons such contentions amongst the works of the Flesh, the doers of which he saies, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Here it is to be observ'd that though the Corinthians differ'd so much among themselves, yet they came together to one place; they did not set up separate Assemblies in opposition to each other: if they had, we may easily suppose that St. Paul would have given them a severer rebuke, and made their Schism to be much worse than that which he represents.

It is an argument *à minori ad majus*: If the Corinthians were guilty of Schism, who thus differ'd in opinion, and yet came to one place; then those are much more so, who differing likewise in opinion about lesser matters, forsake the Assembly of the Church. 'Tis a fault for Man and Wife, Parents and Children to differ and quarrel about small concerns, when they live together; but if

upon

1 Cor. 3. 18.

1 Cor. 3. 3.

Gal. 5. 20.

1 Cor. 3. 18.
of the Kingdom of God
shall not inherit

1 Cor. 14.
23.

upon these accounts they separate and live
 asunder is a much greater. Can you real-

ly believe (to use the words of a Learn-

ed Writer) "that one would do you wrong
 in his discourse
 of Schism p.

"if he made a small rent in your Garment,

71

"and none if he should tear it in pieces?

"that he would be injurious if he wounded

"your hand, and innocent if he cut it off?

"Can you imagine that a mutiny begun in a

"Camp, or Kingdom, is seditious; and that

"an open Revolt is not so? But as well may

"you be persuaded of all this; as that fa-

"ction and disorder in a Church is a sinful

"division, and to desert it as unworthy of

"Communion is none.

Wherefore if the Corinthians were guilt-

ty of Schism without a separation; they

who separate are guilty of a greater Schism;

and consequently are more sinful than they

were; I suppose as before the separation to

be from a sound part of the Catholick

Church; and that the separatists do not dis-

agree with it in Fundamentals. Now our

Dissenters at present do not deny the Church

of *England* to be a sound part of the Catho-

lick Church; or that it has the essentials of

a true Church; they agree with it in points

of Doctrine, but only differ from it in Go-

government, and circumstantial of worship, in both which the Church has the advantage of them, and therefore they are guilty of Schism in the worst sense of the word.

The Government of the Church was settled by the Apostles and continued in the whole Church of Christ without any interruption for 1500 years: and as to the Rites and Ceremonies us'd in it; they are no other, than what are suitable to that Order and decency which is prescribed by *S. Paul*.

1 Cor. 14. 40.

Wherefore since the Assemblies which are set up in opposition to the Church are guilty of Schism; It admits of no dispute that the Occasional Conformists who Communicate with them in all parts of their worship, are guilty of Schism too.

8 Rights of the
Dissenters p.
51. 52. 53.

Our Adversaries indeed tell us that "tho' they separate from us, yet they preserve Charity and kindness for us; and that therefore they are not guilty of Schism, which only consists in uncharitableness. But can they persuade us that That Love and unity which our Saviour prescribes to all his Followers can be preserv'd amongst those, who go to opposite Assemblies? 'Tis remarkable that the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, after his exhortation to them to consider

der one another to provoke unto love and to good works; immediately recommends this as a means of provoking unto Love, and the doing acts of kindness and beneficence to one another; Not to forsake the Assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some was. S. John tells us that if we walk in the Light, we have fellowship one with another; *Qui cum Deo colligantur, necessario etiam inter se colligantur*, saies Grotius upon the place. S. Paul saies that the Church is one body, and that Christ is the head, from which all the body by joynts and bands has nourishment, and is knit together. Now if we pursue S. Paul's comparison, as members cut off from the body cannot have nourishment ministred to them; so those who separate themselves from a true Church cannot be supply'd with spiritual nourishment, because they cut themselves off from a part of the Catholick Church, of which Christ is the head.

If then separation from a true Church deprives them of the influences and benefits of our Saviour, the Charity and kindness which they preserve for us, will do them but little service.

But we know how consistent Charity is

with their Separation, we know how it im-
broy'd the Nation in Quarrels and confusion
from 49 to 60; and how they have been
struggling ever since; particularly at this time;
what Heartburnings and Animosities there
are on that account.

If Separation did not aggravate their
crime, I am sure the Faction is as great as it
was amongst the Corinthians, and therefore
their Schism is at least equal to theirs. *Cle-
mens Romanus* who was contemporary with
the Apostles tells us in his Epistle to the Co-
rinthians, that there was a Schism afterwards
amongst them which proceeded to a separa-
tion, and that That was much greater than
the former.

Wherefore if separation from a true
Church, has a natural tendency to produce
uncharitableness; if it cuts men off from Christs
body; if it has been found by long experi-
ence to be attended with uncharitableness;
if it made the latter Faction among the Corin-
thians more criminal than the former; then
'tis a heighten'd and aggravated Schism.

Thus I have endeavor'd to prove by infe-
rence and deduction from the H. Scriptures,
that the separation from the Church of En-
gland is Schism. 2^{ly}. I shall shew it to be so
according

α ἰνα πὶ διόλυσ-
μα εἰς ἀποσπῆ-
σαι τὰ μέλη τῆ
ἐκκλησίας, ἡ ὁποία
ἐστὶν ὡς τὸ
σώμα ἰδίον, καὶ οἱ
τοις αὐτῇ ὁμοιω-
μεν ἐκκλησίαν, ὡς
ἐκκλησία ἡμεῖς
ὅτι μέλη ἐσμὲν
αὐτῆς; c. 46.
ἡ ἀποστασία
ὁμοίη ἦν αὐ-
τῇς ὡς ἡμεῖς
αὐτῇ; c. 47.

according to the sense of the Writers of the
 first Ages. *schismatis* *id est* *non ordinatus* *non*
 in Schism (saies the forementioned Writer) ^{a The rights of Protestant Dissenters p. 55.}
 in the opinion of the Fathers, is an unneces-
 sary desertion of a lawful Bishop. So far I
 agree with him being supported chiefly by
 the Authority of St. Cyprian and Firmilian:
 the former saies; *Hinc ad Schismata profili-*
zant; dum obrectatur sacerdotibus; dum Epi-
scopis invidetur; cum quis dicitur non se
potius ordinatum; aut adignatur alterum fer-
re prepositum. And again, *Non aliunde huc*
sunt schismata, quam inde quod sacerdoti Dei
non obtemperatur, nec unus in Ecclesia ad tem-
pus facendos, et ad tempus iudei in vice Christi
cogitavit. The latter saies, *Ille vere est Schis-*
maticus quod se a communione Ecclesiastice uni-
tatis apostatam fecerit. ^{d In his Epistle to St. Cyprian.}

But says the forementioned Writer, a law-
 ful Bishop in the writings of the Fathers, is
 the Pastor of a single Congregation: Any
 one that has read Dr. Maurice's Books against
 Mr. Baxter, and Mr. Clarkson would wonder
 at this confident assertion; because he seems
 to have fully answer'd all the pretences that
 those two industrious Authors could muster
 up for Congregational Episcopacy in the first
 Ages of the Church. I will single out some
 few

a The rights
 of Protestant
 Dissenters p.
 55.

b Tract. de Ze-
 lo & Livore.

Ep. 59:

d In his Epistle
 to St. Cyprian.

pag. 55.

few instances, which are enough to satisfy any reasonable man, that Bishops presided over more than one Congregation in the Primitive times; in the opinion of the Fathers.

Timothy and *Titus* were made Bishops by *S. Paul*, the first of *Ephesus*, the second of *Creta*. They had the same powers given them, which we now ascribe to Bishops, the power of Ordination, and the power of Jurisdiction. *Enslinus* and *S. Jerome* say expressly that they were Bishops of those Churches. One you know is call'd by *Marin Augustinus*; which *Mr. Clarkson* understands literally; and if it had a hundred Cities and Christians in each, then certainly it had more than could meet in one congregation. It is observable that *Titus* was order'd by *S. Paul* to Ordain Elders *καὶ πρεβ.*, which is an Argument that there were Christians in every City.

There is no doubt to be made likewise, but there were a great many Congregations in *Ephesus*, and that part of *Asia* which belong'd to it: We are told that *Paul* carry'd there and preach'd the Gospel for two years and three months in publick and private; that all they which dwell in *Asia* heard it; that fear fell upon all the Jews and Greeks that dwell in *Ephesus*; and that the name of the Lord Jesus

was

1 Tim. 5. 19.
22. Tit. 1. 5. 2.
15. 3. 10.
1. H. B. 1. 2. 1.
Cat. B. 1. 3. 1.
Script.
1. H. 6.
1. Prim. Epif.
P. 19.

Tit. 1. 5. 2. 1.

1 Acts 19.

8 Ver. 8. 9. 10.

was magnify'd, that the word of God mightily grew
and prevail'd; and Demetrius tells the *Silversmiths* that they saw and heard, that not alone at
Ephesus, but almost throughout all *Asia*, Paul had
persuaded and turn'd away much people.

After *Timothy's* death we find *Onesimus* in his
place; for he is said to be Bishop of *Ephesus*
by *Ignatius* his Contemporary.

St. Chrysostome tells us that the *Apostles* com-
mitted a City of twenty *Myriads*, or 200,000 to
the care of *Ignatius*, whom they made Bishop of
Antioch.

Cornelius who was Bishop of *Rome* in *St. Cy-
prius's* time calls the Clergy under him, so great
a multitude and so necessary to the Church, and
saies they had the direction of a very great and in-
numerable people; by which you may guess at
the largeness of his Diocese: of the many Con-
gregations there; you may be further inform'd
in *Dr. Maurice's* Vind. of the Prim. Ch. p. 34. 35.
458. &c.

St. Cyprian himself you know was Bishop of
Carthage and Metropolitan; and how many
thousands of Christians there were in that large
City in his Master *Tertullian's* time, if you have
a mind to be satisfy'd, you may look in his *Trea-
tise ad Scapulam*.

From these instances (and you may be fur-
nish'd with many more out of the aforemen-

With the
stances pro-
duced I might
have mention'd
Theodore espe-
cially, who
says his Dio-
cese was forty
miles in length,
and as much in
breadth, and
that there were
800 Churches
in it. Ep. 48.
& Ep. 113. See
likewise Ep.
Billingham's
Unr. of Sep. p.
9. sect. 10. and
Dr. Maurer's
Dioc. Epif. p.
305.
See Rights of
the Prot. Diss.
p. 55.

tion'd books.) It sufficiently appears that a Bishop in Primitive times was Pastor of more than one single Congregation.

Wherefore since our Diocesan Bishops, as such, are lawful Bishops, and an unnecessary desertion of them is Schism in the sense of the Ancients; since they are not chargeable with Heresy, Apostacy, or Immorality, and do not impose any sinful terms of Communion; the desertion of them is unnecessary and the deserters are Schismatics. And since the Occasional Conformist does adhere to those who desert them, and usurp the Ministerial Office; so as to account their Ministry lawful, and to partake with them in their Ordinances, he is guilty of Schism likewise.

The aforementioned Author tells us, that "by Schism be meant a bare difference in Jurisdiction, then our Exempted Churches are Schismatical, because they are not subject to Episcopal jurisdiction p. 56. What if they were? That would not excuse the Conventicles from Schism. But there is this difference between them, and the Conventicles: The Ministers of them are ordain'd by Bishops; They subscribe to the Articles of the Church; use the same form of Prayer, the same Rites and Ceremonies with those that are under Episcopal Jurisdiction, and take it be a defect in the Constitution,

stitution, that they are not immediately subject to the Bishop of that Diocese in which their Parishes are, whom they would willingly submit to, if it pleas'd the Government so to order it.

But the pretended Ministers of the Conventicles either were not Ordain'd by Bishops; or if they were, they have deserted them, and deny their Authority over them; They shew their disobedience to them by setting up Assemblies contrary to the Canons of the Church. They account the Common Prayer either unlawful or very unedifying; and are against the Rites and Ceremonies which are appointed to be us'd in Divine Service.

And upon this account of disobedience to the Bishops, and their usurping the authority of Ministers, they are Schismaticks, as much as the *Nequarians* and *Donatists* were; nay rather more; for though they oppos'd their lawful Bishops, they never pretended to set up opposite Churches without Bishops: but were so far of the same opinion with the Orthodox, that they thought the Office of a Bishop was essential to their constitution. And this is all that need be said to the parallel which this Author would make between Exemptions and Conventicles.

As to what he says concerning the difference of worship in a Cathedral and a Parish-Ch. that is so trifling, that one would think a man of parts

^a See St. Cyprian Optatus, & St. Austin.

should not use it: 'Tis sufficient to say, that the service is the same, though tis sung in one place and said in the other: the ceremonies the same, as to kneeling, standing &c. and in both these, there is a conformity to the rules of the Church; whereas their Conventicles and worship are maintain'd in opposition and disobedience to them.

He speaks very contemptuously of the notion which he says, our *Modern English Divines* have of Schism, viz. that "tis an unnecessary separation from a lawful establish'd Church: He saies "'tis plain that 'tis no Scripture-notion of "Schism, for the *Corinthians* were guilty of "Schism, when they were gather'd together p. 56. By a lawful Church, I suppose he means a Church whose doctrines and government are agreeable to the Laws of *Christ* and his *Apostles*; and I say an unnecessary separation from such an establish'd Church is Schism. I have shew'd before that separation aggravates the Schism: If the people of *England* came together to one place as the *Corinthians* did, and some should contend that there ought to be three Orders of men set a part for divine Service, *Bishops, Presbyters* and *Deacons*: Others that there should be only two, some should be against Forms of Prayer; Others for them; some should be for decent Ceremonies to be us'd in divine Service; Others

against

Against them, some should be for yielding obedience to the injunctions of their Superiors; Others should think they were not oblig'd to it; This would be Schism, but tis much greater now; There is now an open rupture, and it exceeds the former case, as much as War and Fighting does expostulations and remonstrances.

I take every Christian to be oblig'd to Communicate with all Churches that are lawful: Tho' a Church has some defects and imperfections in it, yet if they are such as do not make my Communion with it sinful, I am oblig'd to communicate with it, because I am oblig'd, *if it be possible and as much as lies in me, to preserve unity and to live peaceably with all men*; and I know nothing that does more effectually destroy peace & unity amongst Christians than separation. If I may separate from a Church because it is not the best constituted Church, separation upon these grounds will be endless; because (unless you can suppose all people to be of one opinion) others will think that Dissenting Church, which I cleave to, to be defective, and will set up another, and others another; as we found by sad experience here in *England* between 40 and 60. Wherefore since a breach of unity and peace is Schism; and a separation from a lawful Church is such a breach; therefore a separation from a lawful Church is Schism: and the Schism is the

*2 Ep. 4. 3.
Rom. 12. 18.*

*See Rights of
Protestant Dis-
senters p. 18.*

these dangerous because it is likely to increase
 and multiply, for as I have said, because men
 differ in their judgements, as much as they do
 in their taste and relish of things; for the same
 reason that we separate from a lawful Church,
 because we think it is not the best constituted
 Church; Others will separate from us, and
 Others from them, and so every Christian
 will have in some measure
 made it evident notwithstanding all that this
 Writer has advanced to the contrary, that the
 Dissenters are guilty of Schism; whether we
 consider it as explain'd in the Scriptures, or in
 the writings of the Fathers, or by our Modern
 English Divines; and as I said before, because
 the Occasional Conformists joyn and partake
 with them in all parts of their worship, they
 are Schismatics too.

2/y. They are guilty of Hypocrisy. I agree
 with this Author that a *Hypocrite is one whose*
actions are inconsistent with his Principles, and
that he is conscious that they are so; and I shall
 prove that Occasional Conformity is inconsis-
 tent with the Principles of a Dissenter, as they
 are laid down by him, and that he is conscious
 to himself of it. He says 'tis a principle of the
 Dissenters, that if they don't worship God in
 their way, whilst they think it more acceptable
 to God, than that establish'd by Law, they
 "are

See p. 58.

See p. 58.

See p. 58.

Page 48.

"are worse than Atheists p. 5. They think it their
 "indispensable duty to separate from a Church
 "which abridges them of any Liberty; which
 "Christ has allow'd of &c. and to joyn to other
 "Christian Societies p. 7. They think it neces-
 "sary to separate from a Church, which has so
 "many unnecessary rites; to assert their free-
 "dom from all humane impositions, which they
 "take to be an incroachment on the divine
 "right of our Lord and Saviour; and some of
 "them are not only novel and fanciful, but cor-
 "rupt too. p. 8. They cannot, without a mani-
 "fest disobedience to our Lord, live without
 "joyning with other Churches p. 9. There are
 "those among the Dissenters who think that
 "tho' they are oblig'd by virtue of those Princi-
 "ples to joyn with separate Christian Societies,
 "yet that they ought to joyn with the Church
 "of *England* in some parts of her Worship; be-
 "cause they think the Church of *England* a good
 "and lawful Church &c. p. 12.

Here first you may observe the inconsistency
 of these Principles; he that thinks himself worse
 than an Atheist, if he worship God in the way
 that is establish'd by Law; that thinks it an in-
 dispensable duty to separate from a Church;
 that incroaches upon the divine right of our Sa-
 viour; that otherwise he is guilty of manifest
 disobedience to our Lord: He at the same time

think the Ch. of Engl. a good & lawful Church; & that he ought to join with it in some parts of her worship, upon some occasions; i. e. in receiving the H. Eucharist, which is the principal part of her worship, and the truest Test of Communion with her; inasmuch as he that receives the H. Eucharist with the Church of Engl. does thereby declare himself to be a member of that Church; and he that alwaies refuses it, renounces Communion with her. Now can a man at the same time think it an innocent thing to hold Communion with the Church of England, and yet think himself worse than an Atheist if he worship God in the same way that she does? Can he think it his indispensable duty to separate from the Church, that otherwise he is guilty of manifest disobedience to our Lord, and at the same time seriously acknowledge himself a member of it by participating with it in the most solemn part of its worship? These are such contradictions as can never be reconcil'd in any mans mind.

Wherefore *as*, if the Occasional Conformists imbrace the former principles (which is most likely, because they statedly dissent from the establish'd Church) they cannot admit the latter; and if not; then their Conformity to the Church of England is inconsistent with their principles; which inconsistency they are conscious to themselves of, and consequently they are Hypocrites.

For

For at the same time that they joyn with the Church in that part of its worship, which is the most solemn indication of their Communion with her, they think it their indispensable duty to separate from her, that otherwise they are guilty of manifest disobedience to our Lord.

But the Author tells us that "the Occasional Conformists do not conform to that from which they dissent; they never joyn in any impositions, corruptions or defects of the Church; but this does not hinder them from joyning in other parts of the establish'd Church, which are not faulty in these respects; that the reasons that are given for a separation from the Church don't make it unlawful for a Dissenter to receive the Lord's Supper kneeling &c.

Ans. If the Injunction of a Form of prayer and of kneeling be an incroachment on the divine right our Lord and Saviour has to give Laws to his Church, which is the first reason that this Author gives for a necessity of a Dissenter's separating from the Church; If he takes himself to be more strongly oblig'd to assert his Liberty against the imposition of this Ceremony in particular, because it being novel and fanciful, the imposition of it is an usurpation upon men's Consciences; certainly he must be debar'd from ever joyning in it, concurring to it, abetting it

and giving it any countenance: If he takes an in-
 croachment on the divine right of our Lord and
 Saviour to be a sin (as certainly it is) & therefore
 thinks it his duty to separate from the Church,
 which he supposes to be guilty of this ineroach-
 ment and usurpation; Can he think it lawful
 upon some occasions to abet, and concur to this
 sin? We are commanded *not to partake with other*
men's sins, and *to abstain from all appearance of*
evil: It then we think that receiying the Sacra-
 ment in the Church kneeling, has any appear-
 ance of evil, and thereby we give countenance
 to, and partake with other mens sins; we ought
 alwaies to abstain from it; especially since (as I
 intimated before) the reception of the H. Sacra-
 ment has alwaies been accounted *tessera & sym-*
bolum Communionis, so that He that receives it
 with the Church of *Engl.* is suppos'd to profess
 himself a member of it; and implicitly to de-
 clare his assent to it's Doctrine and Discipline:
 And if at the same time he thinks it's injuncti-
 ons corrupt, an ineroachment on the divine right
 of our Saviour, and an usurpation upon men's
 consciences; the aforementioned action is a-
 gainst his Conscience; inconsistent with those
 Principles, and consequently he is a Hypocrite.
 But further, this Author being resolv'd to free
 the Occasional Conformists from the imputation
 of Schism and Hypocrisy, saies "St. Paul was
 " an

"an Occasional Conformist, and *S. Peter* an Occa-
 "sional Nonconformist; that the Former held
 "Communion statedly with Societies of con-
 "verted Gentiles—and occasionally with the
 "establish'd Church of the Jews, whose consti-
 "tution and worship was widely different from
 "those Societies; and saies till it be prov'd that
 "the establish'd Church of the Reformed Jews,
 "and the Dissenting Assemblies of the Reform-
 "ed Gentiles, don't bear a proportion to the
 "Establish'd and Dissenting Churches in *Eng-
 "land*; or that the reasons of *S. Paul's* stated
 "dissent and occasional Conformity don't bear
 "an exact proportion to the stated separation
 "and Occasional Conformity of the Dissenters.
 "They desire to be excus'd, if they take this to
 "be an Apostolical example which they are ob-
 "lig'd to imitate p. 14. 15.

Ans^r. After our Saviour's Passion and the de-
 scent of the H. Ghost upon the Apostles, They
 were imploy'd to gather, and form a new
 Church; the members of which were to be sav'd
 not by the works of the Law, but by Faith in
 Christ Jesus. The Rites and Ceremonies which
 were commanded by the Jewish Law, being on-
 ly a shadow of good things to come, and typical
 of our Saviour and the Gospel-state, were now
 accomplish'd and their obligation ceased: But
 because they were of divine Institution, the

Apostles were willing they should have a decent sepulture, (as S. *Austine* saies) that they should not immediately be rejected; but wear off by degrees, and that time should be given to the Jews, who had so long prescription for them, to satisfy themselves that there was no necessity for their continuance: Accordingly they permitted them the use of them, but would by no means suffer them to be impos'd upon the Gentiles, or allow them to be necessary to salvation.

This Doctrine, S. *Paul* being the Apostle of the Gentiles, did strenuously maintain; but being a Jew himself, he made no scruple of keeping the Law, as other Jews did, as we find *Acts* 21. 26; He went to the Synagogue every Sabbath *Acts* 18. 4; He circumcis'd *Timothy* because his Mother was a Jewess *Acts* 16. 4; but refus'd to circumcise *Titus* because he was a Greek (i. e. by Father and Mother) *Gal.* 2. 3.

Now let us see whether a parallel may be drawn between S. *Paul*, and an Occasional Conformist.

S. *Paul*, being a Jew, conform'd to the Jewish Church, after he was converted to the Faith of the Gospel; but having a Commission from our Saviour, to convert the Gentiles to the Christian Faith, he forbad them to observe the Jewish Law, because they were never oblig'd to it.

An Occasional Conformist sometimes hears a
Sermon

^a See S. *Austine's* Ep. to S. *Jerome* in S. *Jerome's* works Tom. 2 p. 352.

^b See *Justin Mar.* Dial. with *Trypho* p. 266. Par.

Sermon, and receives the Sacrament in the Church of England, perhaps to qualify himself for an Office, or employment in the State; but generally separates from the Church, because he thinks it incroaches upon the divine right of our Lord and Saviour, by humane impositions; some of which are not only novel, and fanciful, but corrupt too. Did *S. Paul* conform in this manner to the Jewish worship? Did he think it an indispensable duty to separate from the Christian Jews, because they submitted to humane impositions, which were both fanciful and corrupt? Has the Occasional Conformist a call from Christ to gather a Church in this Nation with a commission to forbid them to observe the Rites of the Church, because the obligation of them is expir'd? Did *S. Paul* disobey those that rul'd over him in the Lord, and conform to those who set up opposite Assemblies to theirs? In that Church which this Author calls the established Church of the Reform'd Jews; the observance of those Ceremonies which were enjoyn'd by the Law was left wholly indifferent by the Apostles for reasons before-mention'd; but the observance of ours is for as good reasons commanded by our Superiors; viz. agreeably to *S. Paul's Rules, Let all things be done to edifying, and Let all things be done decently and in order*. The Church of the Gentiles was gather'd 1 Cor. 14. 26
and 40.

and settled by the Apostles, who had immediate authority from God for what they did : But the Ministers of the separate Assemblies cannot produce any immediate commission from Christ, nor shew it us in the Scriptures ; Nay on the contrary they are guilty of manifest disobedience to those rules, which enjoyn unity and peace amongst Christians, and submission to the authority of our Superiors.

And now I appeal to any indifferent Reader, whether the first Christian Jews, and Christian Gentiles, bear any proportion to our establish'd Church, and the separate Assemblies ; or whether the case of *S. Paul* bears an exact proportion to that of our Occasional Conformist, which this Author with great confidence implies *.

Again, If there be any members of the Church of *England* who think the Churches of the Dissenters to be good and lawful, he encourages them to Occasional Nonconformity ; which he saies is supported by the example of *S. Peter*,
 “ who was a stated Communicant with the Jew-
 “ ish Church establish'd by Law, but communi-
 “ cated occasionally with separate Assemblies
 “ of Reform'd Gentiles, who were for some time
 “ held Schismatical, because they would not
 “ suffer the Ceremonies, nor Constitution of the
 “ Jewish Church to be impos'd upon them ;
 “ tho' mightily urg'd to them by the Governors
 of the Reformed Jewish Church”. *Ans.*

Ans^r. S. Paul was as much a stated Commu-
nion with the Jewish Church as S. Peter; They
both conform'd to the Jewish worship, that
they might win their brethren over to a worship
that was more Spiritual, to which they knew
the former in time must yield.

Tho' S. Paul saies that the Gospel of the Cir-
cumcision was committed to Peter, and the
Gospel of Uncircumcision to himself^a; whence ^{a Gal. 2. 7.}

I suppose this Author infers that the one was a
stated Communicant with the Jewish Church, the
other not: yet this is to be understood as Gro-
tius^b saies *ἐπὶ πλὴν ἡ καὶ ὑποτάττειν* viz. It was S. Pe-

ter's Province chiefly to indeavour the conver-
sion of the Jews, & S. Paul's of the Gentiles: But <sup>b Com. in lo-
cum.</sup>

we know that S. Peter was the first of the Apo-
stles, that was made choice of to preach the
Gospel to the Gentiles; that he had a Vision of
a Sheet presented to him full of all sorts of Beasts,
clean and unclean^c; by which he was to under-
stand that the Gentiles were to be receiv'd into
the Peculium. Accordingly he declar'd that in
every Nation he that fear'd God and work'd righte-
ousness was accepted with him; and command-
ed Cornelius the Centurion to be baptiz'd with
other Gentiles: He was the first that rose up
at the Council of Jerusalem, and confronted
those of the sect of the Pharisees, who taught that
it was necessary to Circumcise the brethren and

^{c Acts 10.}

6 Acts 15.

to command them to keep the Law of *Moses* : And on the other side we are told in the Acts of the Apostles, that *S. Paul* converted several Jews *. Both were equally satisfy'd that the partition-wall was broken down, and that God had admitted the Gentiles into his Church, and that they with the Jews were to be one Flock under one Shepherd. But (as I said before) both still conform'd to the Jewish worship (tho' without any opinion of the necessity of the ceremonial part of it) that they might not give offence to their brethren, who were possess'd with a strong opinion of the perpetuity of it's obligation ; but they would not suffer it to be impos'd upon the Gentiles, because they knew it was not necessary, and that it was such a Yoke, as would discourage them from imbracing the Christian Religion, if it were annex'd to it.

6 Acts 28. 24.

So far as I have here represented, did *S. Peter* conform to the Jewish Religion; and such was his behaviour in respect of the Gentile Christians, whom he knew to be receiv'd into the Church, as well as the Jews.

Gal. 2.

Indeed this great Apostle in one instance was too indulgent to the Jews, when for fear of them he withdrew and separated himself from those with whom he had eaten and convers'd before ; and *S. Paul* reproves him for it *, because it look'd as if he had an opinion of the
 conti-

continuance of the Jewish Law; which *S. Paul* knew he had not, and there was great danger that it would give occasion of offence to the weak brethen amongst the Gentiles.

This was the second instance of human frailty which it pleased God should be discover'd in this eminent instrument of his glory; probably that he might not be exalted above measure.

Having premis'd so much concerning *S. Peter's* conduct in relation to the Jewish and Gentile Converts; let us see how far there may be a comparison made between him and an Occasional Nonconformist here in *England*.

The Author supposes the Occasional Nonconformist to think the Churches of the Dissenters to be good and lawful, but the Church of *England* to be the best. *St. Peter* did not think *Pag. 15. the Jewish Church as not reform'd from the Jewish Ceremonies, with which he saies he was a stated Communicant, to be the best; nay so far as it accounted those Ceremonies necessary to be observ'd, he deem'd it erroneous and imperfect; as you may infer from *Acts* 15.

S. Peter knew that the Gentiles were receiv'd into Christ's Church as well as the Jews; and therefore thought it indifferent to communicate with either. The Occasional Nonconformist, who professes himself to be a stated mem-

ber of the Church of *England*, and consequently acknowledges it's Articles and Canons to be good, and warranted by the Scriptures, can by no means justify his Communicating with the Separatists, who being impugnors of the Government of the Church by Bishops, and of the Rites and Ceremonies establish'd in it, are excommunicated *ipso facto* Can. 6, 7.

S. Peter knew that the Ceremonies of the Mosaick Law being fulfill'd in our Saviour, and their obligation ceasing, it was indifferent to use or not to use them; But the Occasional Nonconformist being a stated Communicant of the Church of *England* knows that the Ceremonies of our Church (which are agreeable to the foremention'd rules of the Apostle, and have no Analogy which those injoynd by the Mosaick Law) are commanded by our Superiors; and therefore ought to be comply'd with according to another rule of the Apostle; *Obeys them that rule over you, and submit your selves*; and from this he may easily conclude, that this Occasional Communion with the Separatists, who refuse conformity to them, is a partaking with them in their sinful disobedience.

• Heb. 13. 17.

I am very weary of this odious comparison; I believe by what I have said it appears; that, notwithstanding the attempt of this Author, and others, to liken their Occasional Saints to these

two great Apostles, and of some to our Saviour himself, that they are guilty of Schism and Hypocrisy; and if so, their comparision is prophane and impious.

The Author
of Moderation
a Virtue &c.

Thus I have gone through what I first propos'd, having no intention to meddle with the particular Controversy betwixt this Author and that worthy Gentleman whom he pretends to answer, viz. concerning the right which the Occasional Conformists have to a Toleration; and the seasonableness or unseasonableness of a Law against them; My design was only to shew that they are guilty of Schism and Hypocrisy, and I heartily wish that those who are concern'd in the accusation, would seriously consider of the harmfulness and danger of these two sins.

But because he has some assertions besides those which I have consider'd, which have a near affinity and connexion with them; I shall inquire into the truth of them, and then put you to no further trouble.

He says p. 23. 24. that "No man has any authority, either to oblige another by a Law to believe any speculative Article; or to approve of any particular mode of worship; or else to undergo a penalty: The Magistrate has no such authority; because his Province extends no further than the Lives, Liberties, and Properties of Mankind in general, and of his Sub-

"jects in particular; but cannot reach to points
 "of Faith and Worship; which as they are not
 "the ends of Civil Society, cannot be the mat-
 "ter of the enacting part of any Law. Nor has
 "the Church any such Authority; since her
 "power does not extend to Men's lives, liber-
 "ties and propertyes, which must be affected
 "by the penalties of a Law. Nor have they both
 "together such a power: For the Church has
 "no power to make any such Article, since she
 "has no Legislative Authority, and is restrain'd
 "barely to the execution of those Laws, our
 "Lord has left us &c."

a Pag. 23. 24.

Ans. The Magistrate's Province, he saies,
 cannot reach to any points of Faith and Wor-
 ship, because as they are not the ends of civil
 Society they cannot be the matter of the enact-
 ing part of any Law; Wherefore the ends of
 civil society must be the matter of a Law.

But now Laws being made for the good of
 the Society; That which is the end of Society
 is the end of Laws too. *Aristotle* tells us that
 the end of Society is *to live well and happily*;
 This then is the end of Laws, and it cannot be
 the matter of them; because the matter of a
 Law, must be the object of a mans choice; but
 'tis not in a man's choice whether he would be
 happy or no; All men naturally aim at happi-
 ness; tho' the means by which they endeavour

b L. 3. Pol. c. 6.

to

to attain to it, are very different. Wherefore 'tis absurd to say, that Faith and worship as they are not the ends of civil Society, cannot be the matter of a Law; for if they were, they would be coincident with happiness, and therefore could not. But now if Faith and worship be consider'd as means which conduce to the ends of civil Society, then they may be made the matter of a Law; because the Civil Magistrate may command us any thing that will promote the happiness, and welfare of the Publick: Nothing is more likely to procure the happiness of a Nation than the belief, and practice of true Religion: Wherefore it primarily concerns the Civil Magistrate to take care that That be establish'd and maintain'd.

We find the Jewish and Christian Kings apply'd themselves to this as the most important business of their Government; You see in the Old Testament what a zealous concern *David*, *Solomon*, *Hezekiah*, and *Josiah*, shew'd for the true worship of God, and how many Laws they made relating to it; and what Laws *Justinian* and *Theodosius* made for the defence and protection of the Christian Church, we are sufficiently inform'd in their respective Codes.

This Author saies "No man has any authority to oblige another by a Law, to believe any speculative Article."

Ans. To believe in God and to believe in Jesus Christ are speculative Articles; & I would fain have a true reason given why the Civil Magistrate should not enforce the belief of these with a penalty, since the practice of all virtues depends upon them; According to him Atheists and Infidels have a right to be tolerated; and if they were, no doubt of it, they would make a flourishing Common-wealth: If a Common-wealth can subsist without Justice and Charity, and these Virtues be duly practic'd, without a sense and acknowledgment of the true religion; then have those worshipful persons a right to be tolerated: But if the contrary which, every considering man must allow, they are to be look'd upon as enemies to the publick, and ought with as much reason to be punish'd as Thieves, and Rebels.

Again "No man, he says, has any Authority
 "to oblige another by a Law, to approve of any
 "particular mode of worship". Why not? for the
 same reason, that he cannot oblige him to believe any speculative Article: viz. "Points of
 "Worship likewise are not the ends of Civil
 "Society, and therefore cannot be the matter
 "of the enacting part of any Law". What is the
 end of Civil Society the great Philosopher has shewn us above, viz. *To the Honour & Advancement of* Now
 if the establishment of some particular modes of
 worship

"Pag. 23.

"Ibid.

worship be a means conducive to this end; then those particular modes of worship may be the matter of a Law, and enjoyn'd under a penalty. Uniformity in the modes, and circumstantialis of worship, preserves the decency and solemnity of it; and is a means to promote unity, and concord, in the members of the Church: for if in the time of Divine Service, some should sit, others stand, others walk, such different gestures would occasion great disturbance and confusion; and since the decent performance of divine worship is likely to procure God's blessings to a Nation; and nothing tends to promote the happiness and welfare of it more, than unity and concord; I think it highly concerns the Civil Magistrate to oblige his Subjects by a Law to such a decent performance; and why he should not affix a penalty to the Law, neither this Author nor I can give any reason. Indeed he offers at one p. 261^b, which is very well worth our examination, "No man, he says, has reason to in-
 "force things own'd to be perfectly indiffe-
 "rent: The advantage of the Society being the
 "end and measure of Lawgiving, indifferent
 "things ought not to be the matter of Laws. To
 make sense of this Argument, I will put it into
 this Syllogism

That ought to be the matter of Laws which
 tends to the advantage of the Society.

Indiffe-

Indifferent things do not tend to the advantage of the Society. *Ergo* Indifferent things ought not to be to the matter of Laws.

I deny the Minor. Indifferent things are such as in their own nature are neither morally good nor evil, but become good or evil to us as they are commanded or prohibited by our Superiors; & there are many such which tend to the advantage of the Society. Thus burying in Woollen, the receiving of 2^d or 4^d for a Post-letter are neither morally good nor evil in themselves; yet our wise Legislators have thought fit to make these and many more such things the matter of Laws; and give this as a reason in the preamble of those Laws, that the limitation or determination of them does very much conduce to the advantage of the publick: And as to indifferent things in divine worship, I have just now shown how useful the determination of them is to the Church; and therefore there is as much reason that these should be the matter of Ecclesiastical Laws, as the other of Political.

Thus having answer'd this Author's argument against indifferent things being the matter of Laws, I don't think his wit that follows worth taking notice of.

See p. 10.

In the next Paragraph he tells us, that "That Maxim that Magistrates have an undoubted right

"right to command *Omnia licita & honesta*, has
 "done a great deal of mischief: that this
 "ought to be substituted in the room of it, that
 "they have an undoubted right to command
 "*Omnia justa & utilia*". But now if That be Pag. 26. 27.
Licetum which is not disagreeable to any Law,
 and may be justly commanded; and *honestum*
 and *utile* are reciprocal, as Tully in his *Offices*
 frequently asserts: I cannot see how the former
 Maxim should have done so much mischief, or
 why the latter should be substituted in it's room.

But if the Author understands *licita* and *honestum*
honestum in opposition to *justa* and *utilia*, viz. that
 they may be *injusta* and *inutilia*; I know of no
 body that has laid down such a Maxim, but
 suppose it to be a *Chimera* of his own making.
 All the writers about Laws that I have seen,
 hold it necessary that they should be made for
 the good of the Community; and though it be
 granted that That which is *honestum* may be
inutile, yet it seems absurd, that That which
 is *honestum* should be *injustum*. So that I don't
 see that his Maxim will do greater service to
 the publick than the former.

But he saies, "If the former were the measure
 "of the Magistrates Authority, his Laws might
 "soon come to be no wiser, than that made by
 "*Heliogabalus*, &c. But do such Laws as he
 speaks of, prescribe *honestum*? *Honestum* are things

See p. 26.

reputable or creditable; he cannot say that the Collection of Cobwebs, or Mice, &c. come under that Classe. But further to lessen, and expose this Maxim; that the Magistrates have a right to command *omnia licita & honesta*, he says, "The Jewish Law did injoy *licita* and *honest*, --- but they were an intolerable yoke. A very great honour and respect shewn to God Almighty, whose Laws he ranks with the "Decrees of women, which injoy'd a thousand "impertinencies; and those of *Heliogabalus*, "who at one time, he says, order'd all the Cobwebs of *Rome* to be collected, and at another "a thousand Mice, &c. to be exhibited at a "shew! His substituting *justa* and *utilia*, in the room of *licita* and *honest*, after he had urg'd this instance of the Jewish Laws, implies that those Laws were unjust; to which he deserves another sort of Argument that that which may be brought from reason for an answer.

After he has insinuated this reflection upon God himself, 'tis no wonder that he abuses his Priests; He says "If Magistrates should exert "this Authority in the Church, which the Priests "are desirous to give them; a Complaint of a "celebrated Father against the Church in his "time, for the multiplicity of it's Ceremonies, "would be applicable to ours; that the condition of the Jews was more tolerable than "that

"that of the Christians. This is an unjust censure upon the Clergy; because if you may guess at their Minds from their Subscriptions, they are very well contented with those few Ceremonies that are retain'd in the Church, and with the abolishment of that excessive multitude, which were us'd before the Reformation".

Thus I have endeavour'd to shew the falsity of that Position, which is confidently laid down by this Author, that the Civil Magistrate has no Authority either to oblige another by a Law, to believe any speculative Article (though it were in his power to believe what he would ^b) or to approve of any particular mode of Worship, or else to undergo a penalty.

^a See the Preface to the Common-Prayer-book, Of Ceremonies, why some be abolish'd, and some retain'd.

^b Pag. 23.

There is another immediately following, which upon examination we shall find to be equally false; It is this; "The Church likewise has no such power, since she has no Legislative Authority and is restrain'd barely to the execution of those Laws our Lord has left us.

Answ. The Church has no power to coyn any new Article of Faith, or to declare any thing to be necessary to salvation, but what is expressly as such deliver'd in Scripture, or is evidently to be deduc'd from it: But it has power given it to decree Rites and Ceremonies in those fore-mention'd Texts, *Let all things be done to edifying; Let all things be done decently and in or-*

a Vid. Com.
in locum.

der; Calvin himself owns that in this later Text there is a power granted to the Church to make such Laws as are conducive to good Order and discipline in it. Indeed if *S. Paul* had not given such a Commission; Reason would suggest, that our Saviour left it to the prudence and discretion of the Governors of the Church, to order all things in it that should be for the edification and welfare of it; For since the outward worship of God cannot be perform'd without circumstances, and those circumstances are not specify'd any where in the N. Testament; 'tis a plain indication of our Saviour's will that they should be determin'd by the Governours of the Church.

b Esther 9. 26.
27. 28.
c 1 Mac. 4. 59.
d Joh. 10. 22.

We find that the Jews who had Laws so particularly determining and so fully instructing them in all affairs what to do, did notwithstanding *pro re nata*, enact Laws about Ecclesiastical matters; witness their Feast of *Purim*^b, of the Dedication of the Temple solemniz'd by our Saviour himself^d and their Synagogal worship. And if they were allow'd to establish such Laws, who had the minutest circumstances of worship prescrib'd them by *Moses*; much more ought the Christian Church, since it has not pleased God to give it any commands about them.

The Author says "the Church has not any
"authority

"authority to oblige men to believe &c. or to
 approve of any particular mode of worship, or
 else to undergo a penalty, because her power
 does not extend to their lives, liberties, or
 properties."

Answer. The Church can inflict a greater penalty than any of those that affect men's lives, civil liberties, or properties viz. it can denounce excommunication against those that are disobedient to its injunctions, which, if they have a due sense of it, must shrewdly affect their Consciences; and therefore tho' its power does not extend to the former, that is no argument that it is not invested with a Legislative Authority.

I think what has been said is a sufficient answer to the aforementioned Paradox.

I am sorry to find the same principles vented now, which were conceiv'd and espous'd by some Enthusiasts in the two last Ages; but were fully disprov'd by some of our ablest Divines*. It must needs occasion very melancholy reflections to those that are well dispos'd to this Church, and Nation, to observe mens minds to be so infatuated, as to oppose the plainest truths, and to persist in their prejudices, notwithstanding the greatest evidence, and means of conviction that can be offer'd them. But I hope the obstinacy, and unreasonableness of other men will

* Arch-Bishop
 Whiggis, Mr.
 Hooker, Bishop
 Saunderson &c.

will never discourage us from a constant adhe-
 rence to those principles which we have so
 happily receiv'd; and that we shall lay out all
 our strength, however insufficient it be, to defend
 our Religion which was so wisely settled by our
 Fore-Fathers, between the extremes of Super-
 stition and Profaneness. Above all let us be very
 fervent in our petitions to the great Author and
 Finisher of our Faith, that he will maintain his
 own cause, that he will stretch out his Arm to
 support and protect his Church, which is now
 openly assaulted by it's avow'd Enemies, and
 betray'd and deserted by it's pretended Friends.
*O pray for the peace establishment and secu-
 rity of our Jerusalem, they shall prosper that
 love it.*

I am sorry to find the same principles vented
 now, which were formerly espous'd by
 some Enthusiasts in the two last Ages; but were
 fully disprov'd by some of our ablest Divines.

And I think
 it will be
 found in the
 margin of the
 text.

It must needs occasion very melancholy re-
 flections to those who are dispos'd to this

E R R A T A.
 PAG. 2. L. 12. r. Church. p. 6. in the margin. p. 10. l. 29. w. to be a
 defect. p. 25. l. 4. r. brethren. p. 26. l. 22. r. his Occasional. p. 28. l. 7. r. liberty
 and property. p. 30. contrary, which. p. 32. r. in the margin p. 26.
 and to point in their prejudices notwithstanding
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 obstinacy, and unreasonableness of other men
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